



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 13 January 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
13 JANUARY 1968

1. Greece

Ambassador Talbot reports that the junta leaders have reached the explosion point over what they consider refusal of their NATO allies to do business with them.

On Thursday Interior Minister Pattakos complained bitterly to an embassy officer that the "attitude" of the US and other NATO countries is creating uncertainty among the Greek people.

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Later that night, Papadopoulos was slightly more restrained during a long talk with the Ambassador. Papadopoulos nevertheless insisted there is no valid reason for US refusal to continue formal relations. He threatened to announce within a week that "NATO had rejected Greece."

The junta has been hot under the collar over alleged US coolness ever since the April takeover. The vehemence of these recent remarks suggests some troublesome public statement may in fact be imminent.

2. Cyprus

The Turks, convinced that U Thant favors the Greek Cypriot position, have made clear they want no part of him as a mediator of the basic dispute. Ankara insists that U Thant's mandate does not cover mediation of a final settlement anyway, and thinks he should stick to security matters and disarmament of "illegal" forces.

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3. Laos -
North Vietnam

The North Vietnamese tried something new in northern Laos yesterday, and it flopped. Two little biplanes tried to bomb the important anti-insurgent staging base at Phou Pha Thi. The gunner on an Air America helicopter shot down one with a carbine, and the other crashed into a hillside. Damage was minimal to the base, which also provides communications and navigational support for US air operations over North Vietnam.

We have been hearing persistent reports of an enemy buildup in this area, but so far there is no sign of any ground attack to follow up the "air raid."

4. South Vietnam

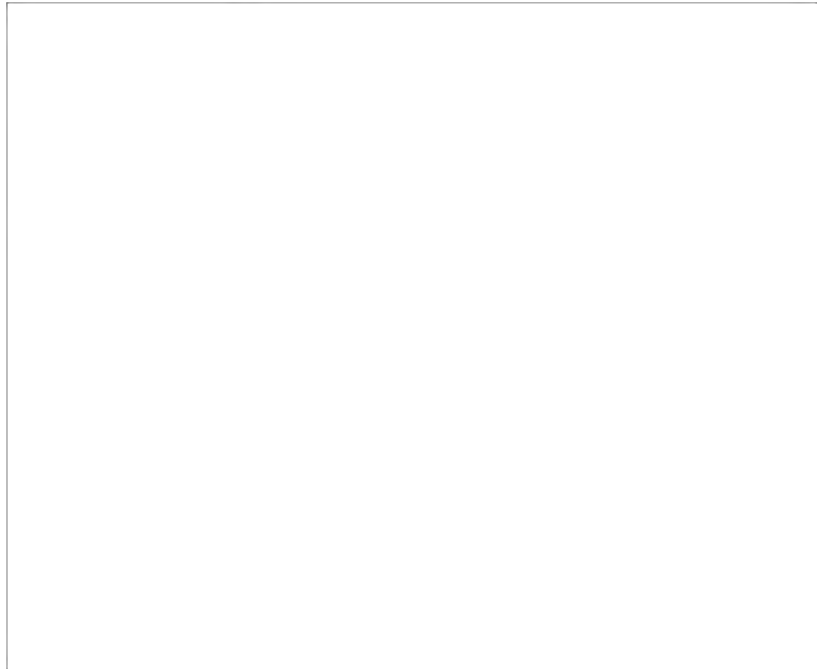
The strikes in Saigon spread yesterday when dock workers walked out to protest the arrest of the six labor leaders on Thursday. The six, meanwhile, refuse to negotiate an end to the electrical workers strike while they remain behind bars.

President Buu of the Vietnamese Confederation of Labor blames Labor Minister Long for the problem because of his opposition to all independent labor groups. Buu is nevertheless doing what he can to settle the trouble.

5. South Vietnam

Rice production for this crop year is going up about three percent, according to early figures of the Ministry of Agriculture. This would be the first increase since 1964. The higher nationwide output would be due wholly to increases in the Delta provinces; production in other areas actually declined.

6. Middle East



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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

North Vietnam has begun to issue propaganda in support of Foreign Minister Trinh's 30 December Statement: Thus far, it is limited to underscoring the importance of the new formulation and to pointing out that the US has failed to respond. It contains no elaboration of what Hanoi has in mind regarding any talks with the US.

In separate broadcasts on 11 and 12 January, Hanoi praised the "correct stand" of the North Vietnamese government as expressed in Trinh's remarks, and stressed that the new formulation had already received world-wide support. The broadcasts went to great length to indicate that the US is attempting to distort Hanoi's position and that the Americans continue to put forward their own "arrogant terms" for talks. Hanoi discounted statements by US officials that Trinh's remarks are being studied and claimed that the US position as espoused in the San Antonio formula is "an insolent demand that our people accept the US terms before the US agrees to stop the bombing." The statements also pointed to the recent alleged bombing of a Soviet and a Chinese ship and other "war acts" as evidence of US bad faith and that the US intends to intensify and expand the war.

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Moscow Takes Pessimistic Line: TASS notes a commentary in the Soviet military newspaper Red Star of 12 January saying that once again the US is showing it is not interested in a peace settlement. Claiming that "American politicians" still are seeking a military solution to the Vietnam conflict, the paper asserts that an expansion of military action is Washington's "reply" to Hanoi's recent statement that it will talk after a bombing halt. The article says US escalation has always brought about new measures by the Vietnamese "and their friends," and that this will be true this time as well.

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War Protesters in Holland Are Dealt a Heavy
Blow: The Dutch Vietnam Committee, one of the two
biggest Dutch organizations protesting the war,
has decided to dissolve itself

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This will be an important setback for the
organized Dutch protest movement and probably means
a deflation, at least for the time being, to the
anti-Vietnam demonstrations in Amsterdam, where
most of this kind of activity has taken place.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Nothing of significance to report.

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